

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 4-7 and 15-18 remain pending in this application. Claims 4, 7, 15 and 18 are independent and have been amended herein.

In the final Office Action dated August 17, 2007, Claims 7 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,575,549 (Silverbrook). Claims 7 and 18 were also rejected under § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,481,816 (Oyen). Claims 4-6 and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Oyen in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,278,469 (Bland et al.). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In Oyen when an image-forming element breaks down, the information of that pixel is transferred to an addressable position in the vicinity of an associated pixel, but Oyen does not describe increasing the driving frequency of neighboring nozzles.

Silverbrook describes a method for compensating for device failure by shifting ink dots sideways or lengthways to adjacent rows or columns. While in Figure 3 of Silverbrook ink jets G and I may eject more droplets in a single scan compared to that in Figure 2, there is no disclosure or suggestion that the driving frequency increases. In comparing Figures 2 and 3 with Figures 4 and 5, Silverbrook distinguishes the latter figures by stating that they merely require more dots on average.

Oyen and Silverbrook fail to disclose or suggest at least that when printing data corresponding to an abnormal nozzle is added to corresponding neighboring nozzles, a driving frequency for ejecting ink from neighboring nozzles is increased by 2 times, with the driving frequency being a frequency for driving the printing head to eject ink in performing the printing, as is recited in independent Claims 7 and 18.

Thus, Silverbrook and Oyen fail to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent Claims 7 and 18.

Oyen also does not disclose or suggest that when one of the neighboring nozzles has a better landing state than the other, the ratio of the printing data corresponding to the abnormal nozzle to be added to the printing data corresponding to the one neighboring nozzle than the other neighboring nozzle, as is recited in independent Claims 4 and 15.

Thus, Oyen fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent Claims 4 and 15.

As discussed previously, Bland et al. describes utilizing a print mask that enables deposition of more ink from higher quality nozzles and less ink from lower quality nozzles. Bland et al., however, does not determine the higher quality nozzles to be used for compensating based on a landing state of the higher quality nozzles. Moreover, Bland et al. does not disclose or suggest when one nozzle is of a lower quality, transferring more of the printing data of that nozzle to a neighboring nozzle of a higher quality than that of

another neighboring nozzle. Bland et al., therefore, fails to remedy the deficiencies of Oyen noted above with respect to the independent claims.

Thus, the independent claims are patentable over the citations of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the §§ 102 and 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 4, 7, 15, and 18. Dependent Claims 5, 6, 16, and 17 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-identified Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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